

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 and 20-21 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 8-17, and 20-21 have been amended.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-17 and 20-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,477,533 (Schiff) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,948,040 (DeLorme) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,266,648 (Baker) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,622,125 (Cragun) in view of U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2001/0044788 (Demir) or in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,918,209 (Campbell).

Schiff is directed to a system for tracking agent interaction with customers implemented in a web server environment. In the Schiff system, a plurality of remote users utilizing web browser programs electronically communicate with the system via a data communications network. According to Schiff, the system includes an electronic customer database configured to store information about a plurality of customers and an electronic agent database configured to store information about a plurality of agents. The system also includes a cruise selling and booking system.

DeLorme is directed to a computerized travel reservation information and planning system that generates "map ticket" output in various media, for guidance and transactions en route. According to DeLorme, the Travel Reservation and Information System (TRIPS) permits a user to custom-define and examine a travel route and/or plans based upon answers to questions. The TRIPS is capable of determining, reserving, and/or ticketing locations along a travel route between a user-selected travel origin and travel destination, including user-selected waypoints of interest along a way, according to DeLorme.

Baker is directed to a computer system and method for permitting a consumer to more effectively make use of a variety of available benefits from a plurality of goods and service providers, wherein the benefits are offered specifically to those consumers having an association with one or more enabling organizations. The system includes a memory for storing consumer information, enabling organization information and benefit correlation information.

Cragun is directed to an automated sales promotion selection system using neural networks to identify promising sales promotions based on recent customer purchases. The system includes a customer information device that receives customer data relating to customer purchases of items from an inventory of items, a central processing unit having a sales promotion neural network and a storage unit containing a plurality of item identifiers.

Demir is directed to a system and method for pricing air charter services. The system includes a programmed computer, a storage device, a demand forecasting module, a demand matching module, and an intelligent pricing module. According to Demir, the intelligent pricing engine prices air charter services based upon demand matching and forecasting.

Campbell is directed to a method and system for determining marginal values for perishable resources expiring at a future time. Data for the perishable resources and composite resources is loaded from a perishable resource revenue management system into the marginal value system. Internal data structures are constructed for linking each of the perishable resources to their associated composite resources and for linking each of the composite resources to their associated perishable resources.

Campbell discloses a method and system for determining values for perishable resources expiring at a further time. In reference to FIG. 2B, when an airline reservations system 14 receives a booking request for a flight, the system compares the summation of marginal values and the net value of the reserved flight, and accepts the reservation when the net value exceeds the summation of marginal values. Campbell also discloses that the marginal values are determined based upon a demand curve (see FIGs. 7A and 7B).

The present invention relates to a method and system for reducing quiet time periods, that is, hours when only a few customers visit a shop or the like, and determining discount services in consideration of factors such as the weather, the day of the week, and the hour of the day, which produce quiet time periods.

In at least one embodiment of the present invention, the apparatus for accepting transaction reservations calculates a prospective number of customers coming to a shop, for example, without reservation. The calculation is performed with the product of the target number of persons coming to the shop, the coefficients stored in the day-of-week coefficient table and coefficients stored in the weather coefficient table, for example. Then, a reservation rate of the reservation, which each customer has performed, is calculated, based on the prospective number of persons coming to the shop without reservation, which was calculated according to the first calculation described above. See specification of the present invention, page 19, line 24 – page 20, line 9. See also FIGs. 4B and 4C of the present invention.

On page 30 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that, "reliance on a large number of references in a rejection does not, without more, weigh against the obviousness of the claimed invention." Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's reliance on an excessive number of references *in combination with* the below-identified arguments support Applicants position that

the claims of the present invention are not obvious in light of the references.

Applicants further respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 2, 8-17, and 20-21 are patentable over the references, as none of the references, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest, "... discount services are determined based on a *rate of reservation which is obtained on the basis of calculating results of coefficients defined for factors reducing the transaction*, and numbers of transaction reservations." See claim 1, for example, emphasis added.

The cruise selling and booking system of Schiff merely provides selectable criteria related to booking a cruise such as cabin occupancy and sailing date preferences. See Schiff, column 20, lines 38-45. Assuming *arguendo* that Schiff discloses information on discount services, as argued by the Examiner, Schiff does not disclose a rate of reservation which is obtained *on the basis of calculating results of coefficients* defined for factors reducing the transaction, as in the present invention.

DeLorme, Baker, Cragun, and Campbell also do not disclose or suggest information relating to coefficients defined for factors reducing the transaction. Although Demir discloses that a price discount is generated based upon demand matching information, the discount information is provided according to whether an aircraft is in use. Thus, if the aircraft is already in use, the cost is reduced.

Assuming *arguendo* that Demir discloses determining discount services according to a rate of reservation and that Demir's alleged rate of reservation is obtained on a basis of a number of transaction reservations, as in the present invention, Demir does not obtain a rate of reservation on a basis of an additional factor. That is, in contrast to the present invention, Demir does not obtain a rate of reservation on the basis of both a number of transactions *and calculating results of coefficients* defined for factors reducing the transaction.

Further, the Examiner alleges that the cited reference Demir discloses the discount service of the present invention which correlates to transactions and reservations. Demir, however, discloses pricing on the basis of demand matching information which includes information on travel requests accepted by the system. Thus, Demir's pricing is different from that of the present invention, in which a discount service is determined irrespective of a demand from a customer.

Although Cragun discloses "a weather season" and considers "a particular time of day," the disclosure simply relates to sales promotion and is not tantamount to or related to obtaining a rate of reservation on both a basis of a number of transaction reservations and calculating

results of coefficients, as in the present invention.

In light of the foregoing, claims 1, 2, 8-17, and 20-21 are patentable over the references. As the dependent claims depend from the independent claims, the dependent claims are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented above for the independent claims.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Serial No. 09/693,919

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after the response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 6/2/06

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